



State Representative **Roger Bush**

The 2001 Session Report Achievements for the 2nd District

Dear Friends,

Through this newsletter, I hope to highlight the achievements of the 2001 Legislature. Too often we are bombarded with negative spin from outside sources that fail to recognize positive results. It may not make the headlines, but I continue to try and protect taxpayers and shape an efficient government that truly represents the best interests of all Washington citizens.

The 2001 session has been marked by other significant accomplishments that will improve your quality of life. From maintaining the integrity of elections and protecting your privacy to increasing the penalties for meth production, our area and the entire state will benefit from the actions we took in 2001.

And, contrary to headlines, we did pass a transportation budget that will provide numerous safety improvements to Pierce County roadways. I was proud to vote for this transportation plan that included NO NEW TAX INCREASES. Information on area projects is inside.

I hope you enjoy the information and feel free to contact me with any questions. You deserve to know where your money goes. I'm looking forward to hearing and reading your thoughts.


Rep. Roger Bush



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**Coming Next Month: The Capital Budget – An investment in Washington's
K-12 and higher education systems, plus natural resources.**

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CRACKING DOWN ON CRIME



Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine is that fastest growing drug problem in our state. Part of the reason is that the drug is cheap and easy to make. In fact, most of this toxic drug's ingredients can be purchased over the counter at the local store. Known as precursor drugs, ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine are common ingredients in some cold medications or fertilizer.

In 1998, there were 349 meth labs in our state. The number of labs reported for the year 2000 reached 1,449 with Pierce County accounting for 543. That is a statewide increase of well over 400% in just 3 years.

This year, the Legislature passed, and the governor signed, a law making it a crime for retailers or pharmacies to sell more than three grams or three packages of ephedrine, pseudoephedrine or phenylpropanolamine to a person in a 24-hour period.

Personal Privacy

It was in 1998 that the issue of privacy and increasing computer use began to receive much-needed attention. We began to see a serious problem of “**spamming**,” or junk e-mail. I authored a measure during the 1998 legislative session that would punish those who send unauthorized commercial e-mail.

It became law in June of that year, but was challenged by one of the first companies levied a fine. On June 7, our state's Supreme Court ruled in favor of the law. **The law is the first of its kind in the nation and has served as a model for other states.** I hope spammers finally get the message with this ruling that citizens of Washington will not tolerate it any longer.

The ruling helps each of us, including the thousands of children who go on the Internet every day, have a better and safer experience on the web. Spamming may be a minor annoyance, but it speaks to the far more serious problem of information available on the Internet.

Identity Theft

Identity theft is one of the few crimes that increased last year. Washington has consistently ranked in the top five, ahead of states such as Colorado, Nevada and Minnesota, in the number of identity theft crimes. This shows me that we need to take a serious look at what we are doing to both prevent and punish those who take personal information, without the victims' knowledge, to commit fraud or theft.

We did pass a law that places additional restrictions on collection agencies and credit reporting agencies. This will make it easier for victims of identity theft to retrieve information from credit reporting agencies and banks and clear their damaged credit history.

A new law I sponsored, House Bill 1899, will further protect the personal privacy of all those who hold professional licenses in Washington as it prohibits the use of a social security or driver's license number on the license of the 18 professions required to be licensed in our state. Placing personal information in plain view also creates safety concerns. We must do all we can to protect Washington's citizens.

“ This would not have been accomplished without your support, hard work and dedication in moving this bill through the Legislature. I am appreciative of the tremendous amount of time, energy and commitment you put into getting this bill to the Governor's desk. ”

— Attorney General Christine Gregoire in a June 6 letter to Rep. Roger Bush

YOUR STATE BUDGET



House Republicans were committed to working with Democrats to responsibly address the state's financial future. While Republicans shared ideas for common sense spending, Democrats were unable to control their desire for excessive spending. Projections estimated that two years from now we could face up to a **\$1.7 billion** deficit. This budget was a recipe for massive tax increases or drastic cuts to basic services. It did not set proper priorities for a responsible and sustainable budget. I voted “No.”

The 2001 Session Report

ONE PERSON – ONE VOTE

Election Integrity



I also sponsored a new law, HB 1739, to combat voter fraud and ensure the integrity and reform the election process in Washington by standardizing the registration process. It takes the first step to protect citizens from the election problems recently witnessed in other parts of the country. Our system depends on consistency and fairness. This law will guarantee those safeguards, plus establish Washington as a leader in election reform. This law makes our state's system even better by closing any doors to fraud and other illegal voting practices by:

- requiring persons registering to vote to be reminded of the age and citizenship qualifications for voter registration;
- providing new procedures for voter list maintenance.

EDUCATION



I'm very pleased with the \$408 million included for statewide construction of K-12 educational facilities. We also made policy changes this year to approve alternative certification, bringing more talented new teachers to our classrooms. And, we are retaining highly skilled teachers by allowing retired employees to continue working in the classroom. As an elementary school teacher, I see these as important steps in continuing my commitment to the children of my district and the entire state.



Rep. Roger Bush points out how legislators vote on bills in Olympia to a group of students from Centennial Elementary in Graham. The group visited the Capitol just following its post-earthquake reopening.

WATER RIGHTS REFORM

House Bill 1832 brought about landmark water rights reform that will reduce the permit backlog and expedite the water rights application process. The law created two lines for permits, one for new rights and the other for changes or transfers.



ENERGY

The **historic and comprehensive energy package** approved by the Legislature this session combines sensible conservation measures with a focus on new power. The House legislation also appropriates an additional \$2.5 million for low-income energy assistance, helping the families and senior citizens who are being hurt worst by these huge rate increases. **We supported and passed a sensible package** that offers both short- and long-term relief to energy consumers. The package focuses on bringing more power to the state. Republicans worked hard for this package and will continue to look toward the future and do more to meet our state's most vital needs.



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TRANSPORTATION

No, this wasn't a "do-nothing" Legislature. On the last day of the second 2001 special session, the Legislature passed a "current law" transportation budget that includes \$3.5 billion in funding. **I was proud to vote for this budget that didn't raise taxes** and funded Pierce County projects such as State Route 161, the "Meridian" widening project. In 2002, you will see the first dirt being moved to widen this road to five lanes. Transportation projects can sometimes take many years to see any actual construction work and I am proud to say we moved this project up **FIVE YEARS!**



The current transportation budget will improve roadways all over our area, including the safety improvements near Northwest Trek Wildlife Park, upgrades to Highway 507 from the Roy "Y" to McKenna and the Tanawax Highway. I understand first hand the frustrations caused by traffic congestion, but am not willing to support a transportation plan without assurances it will be a true investment in our state. My priority is a package that also improves efficiency and accountability in the way the state conducts its business. The benefits of wise transportation spending decisions are clear as we see the continuing improvements on Mountain Highway. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to bring this important funding back to Pierce County.

Join me for a Town Hall!

Saturday, Sept. 22

► **Parkland/Spanaway
Library**

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

► **Graham Library**
4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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